

NEWSLETTER

NYLC Gives Back

Council members participate in the 1st Food Drive for local charities



For this year's Holiday meeting, NYLC participated in our first ever Food Drive to support local food pantries in Nebraska. Council members were asked to collect donations from their communities. When weather cancelled our

December 3rd meeting, several council members chose to drop off donations at their local food pantry. Pictured above include (from left to right) Christina, Addy, Steffie, and China who brought in their non-perishable food items to our rescheduled

The Year Ahead ...

I couldn't be more excited for this new year of NYLC activities to begin. As always, we have a lot to look forward to this spring with Self Advocacy workshops and Transition fairs to put our leadership skills to work.

In this edition of the newsletter we will catch up with some of our busy NYLC members as they take on new leadership roles representing youth with disabilities outside of our council.

- Warmest Wishes,
Kristi Berst

January 7th meeting. Food items were donated to the Crossroads Center Rescue Mission in Hastings which is experiencing a steadily high number of guests this year.

Thank you to all who participated!

HALEY JOINS THE PLANNING COUNCIL FOR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

by Haley Wagonner

My experience being on the DD Council gives me perspective on how the state is helping people with disabilities. We talk about the new bills that are coming up in January (for the state legislature). Then we give grants to other boards to cover costs like going to conferences in state or out-of-



state. I'm new to the council and have only been to one meeting so far, but I like it very much. Because most of the members have disabilities or have family members who have disabilities, it is good to talk to them.

For more information about the Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities visit:
www.dhhs.ne.gov/ddplanning

WINTER MEETING



Top: Most of our meeting participants
Bottom: Central Council hard at work finding uncommon things in common, a game they WON!!

The weather couldn't stop us this time! NYLC rescheduled our Holiday meeting from December 3rd to January 7th and those who could make it had a GREAT time!

Our morning was spent preparing for the various activities each regional council has coming up this spring. NYLC members will have the chance to get out and speak with a lot of young people about the importance of self-advocacy. We also played a couple of team-building games and found out the Central council has the most "uncommon" things in common.

In the afternoon we were able to relax a little bit with our White Elephant gift exchange and holiday luncheon courtesy of Valentino's in Grand Island. Even

Council Meetings

February 4

Northeast Council meets in Wayne

February 18

Advisory Council meets in Lincoln AND via video conference

February 25

Central Council meets in Grand Island

March 3

East Council meets in Papillion

April 7

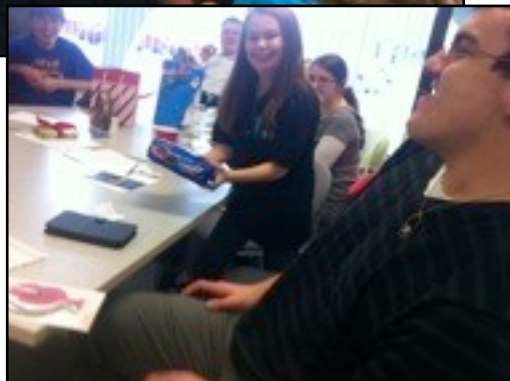
Advisory Council meets in Lincoln AND via video conference (tentative)

with a couple of gift "thieves" everyone ended up with great gifts and a lot of laughs as well.

Be sure to check the calendar for your next council meeting.



Above: Justin stole Sammy's gift.
Right: Then Clarissah stole the same gift from Justin. Great fun!



Left: China and our interpreter Carol joining in on the fun.
Below: Bruce opened up some yummy gifts for his White Elephant surprise.



TRANSITION FAIR IN HASTINGS

ESU #9 hosted its Annual Transition Fair on November 16th at the Hastings City Auditorium. NYLC was one of many programs invited to attend. Each organization had its own table where students and teachers could stop by for more information and to ask questions about how each organization can help students who are getting ready to graduate (or transition) out of high school.

Mikayla, Nicole, and Brionna did an awesome job representing the Central Council. They spent the afternoon talking to students

about NYLC and all our fun activities!

Mikayla shared: "It was so much fun!! We met new people...we had a lot of people at our booth better than last year."

#1 (left to right): Mikayla, Nicole, and Brionna dressed up for the "Investigator" Theme Transition Fair.

#2 (left to right): Brionna, Nicole, and Mikayla showing off their NYLC pride.



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EXPLORING EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS

Back in October, the Omaha West Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) office sponsored their Exploring Employment Options workshop. Separate sessions were offered for high school students and their teachers. Justin V of the State Advisory Council spoke to both the teachers and then the students about NYLC. Students were interested to learn about the different activities NYLC does and who is eligible to participate.

Justin has been a member of NYLC since the program began in March 2009. He has had a lot of experience

speaking to groups this size and did a great job!

Other presentations at the Exploring Employment Options workshop included local business owners who shared what their expectations were for future employees.

Thank you Justin for participating and Omaha West VR for including NYLC in the event.

#3: Justin talked to the audience of students about NYLC and what we do to help other youth.

#4: Justin answered several questions from the students about how they can get involved with NYLC.



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SHARON JOINS THE PTI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

by Sharon Ward

The Parent Training and Information

Center of Nebraska (PTI) is a resource for families of children with disabilities and special health care needs. Sharon's role on the Board will be to represent youth in the areas that affect their lives.

Below Sharon shares her experience serving on the Board so far.

The PTI board has been an excellent opportunity for me to get involved with an elite group of caring people whose ultimate goal is to help parents who have children with disabilities. I was asked to join to the board because NYLC member Morgan Lyons

had to move out of Nebraska. I was honored when Kristi Berst asked me if I could join the board. I was unsure if I would have enough time to fully commit myself to the board, but after I got some more information about the board I knew I wanted to be a part of this elite organization.

This board meets four times a year at 60th and Grover. I have only been to one meeting so far, where we just elected a new president, vice president, secretary, etc. In future meetings I expect to learn and give input on activities and experiences that would grab youth with disabilities attention. I think this board is a good fit for me because I have firsthand experiences with disabilities through myself with ADHD, and with my older brother who has autism. I am

excited to give an insightful view on things as well as learn a lot from this board.

For more information about PTI-Nebraska visit:

www.pti-nebraska.org

Contributors

HALEY WAGONNER



Haley has been a member of NYLC since April 2010. She was a member of the East Council and was recently accepted as a new member of the State Advisory Council.

SHARON WARD



Sharon has been a member of NYLC since April 2010. She is a member of the East Council.

JAMIE KRIEN



Jamie has been a member of NYLC since April 2010. She is a member of the East Council.

JAMIE'S OSEP EXPERIENCE

by Jamie Krien

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) is the federal office that helps support states to improve outcomes for children with disabilities. OSEP spent a week in Nebraska learning about Nebraska Special Education programs and Jamie was asked to represent NYLC and young people in the state who have been involved with special education in school on a panel.

Below Jamie shares her experience serving on the panel of participants.

I spoke at the Nebraska Department of Education in Lincoln about my experiences with the Nebraska Youth Leadership Council. I listened to speeches about how to prevent high school drop outs, why they are happening, and what to do about it. The meeting also talked



about disabilities and challenges that affect people from continuing their education. We brainstormed ideas and discussed solutions. The meeting was two days long. I had a really good time participating and learning about education and the help that was out there. The food was really good and people were friendly and welcoming.

Please visit www.ed.gov for more information about the

Department of Education Office of Special Education and www.education.ne.gov for more information about the Nebraska Department of Education.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Activities Calendar

February 10

Self Advocacy Workshop at ESU 6 in Milford

February 24

Self Advocacy Workshop at ESU 8 in Neligh

March 6

Student presentation at Orchard High School

March 20

ENTC - Transition Workshop at Southeast Community College in Lincoln

March 21

ENTC - Transition Workshop at Midlands University in Fremont

March 28

Youth 1st Conference at UNK

March 30

ENTC - Transition Workshop at ESU 3 in Omaha

NYLC

6949 S. 110th Street

Omaha, NE 68128

NYLC member

Address

Anytown, NE ZIP